

In the Specification

On Page 4, please replace the second paragraph with the following paragraph:

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a1 The present invention provides a method of operating a postage metering system, a method of operating a data center, a method of operating a business reply mail processing system, a data structure for use in processing business reply mail and a business reply mail piece. Generally, this is accomplished by associating a delivery address for a mail campaign, of which the business reply mail piece is a part, with a registration ID number that is subsequently used by a recipient (user) of the business reply mail piece to apply postage to the business reply mail piece.

{ On Page 4, please replace the third paragraph with the following paragraph: }

In accordance with the present invention, there is provided a method of operating a postage metering system for printing a postage indicium for use with a business reply mail piece. The method includes the step(s) of: (i) transmitting a registration ID number to a data center, the registration ID number being associated a particular mail campaign of which the business reply mail piece is a part; (ii) receiving postage indicium information from the data center, the postage indicium information including delivery address information generated using the registration ID number; and (iii) printing the postage indicium on the business reply mail piece using the postage indicium information.

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On Page 7, please replace the first paragraph with the following paragraph:

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Q2 The postage metering system 400 may be of any conventional type that is compliant with the IBIP Specifications, such as the ClickStamp® Online metering system available from Pitney Bowes Inc. of Stamford, Connecticut. Generally, the postage metering system 400 includes a computer system 410, such as a personal computer (PC) running appropriate application software, and a printer 420 (laser printer, thermal transfer printer, thermal direct printer, ink jet printer, or the like) interfaced with the computer system 410 using conventional communication techniques (RS 232, LAN, WAN, TCP/IP, or the like). Using the computer system 410, the user initiates a transaction session with the data center 200 for the purpose of printing postage. The computer system 410 and the data center 200 work cooperatively to generate and print a postage indicium 28. Further information about the details of this transaction session and the exchange of information between the data center 200 and the computer system 410 are provided in U.S. Patent Numbers 5,835,689; 5,781,438 and 5,781,634; all of which are specifically incorporated herein as reference. As discussed above, the postage metering system 400 may print directly on the mail piece to produce the postal indicium or on label stock for subsequent application onto the mail piece.

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On Page 10, please replace the second paragraph with the following paragraph:

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Q3 Referring to Figs. 1, 3 and 4, as a further optional aspect of the present invention, the sender may wish to subsidize the postage associated with the BRMP 20. Traditionally, senders have subsidized the cost of postage by applying for a permit with the United States Postal Service (USPS). An example of such a mail piece is shown in Fig. 2C. However, this postage paid BRMP 20 does not provide any incentive for the user to respond quickly. Thus, in instances when the sender would like a quick response (bill payment, etc.), the user has no particular motivation

to do so. Also, the sender must make an application to the USPS to obtain the permit number.

On page 10, please replace the third paragraph with the following paragraph:

On the other hand, the sender may utilize the data center 200 to subsidize the postage by providing an appropriate authorization to the data center 200. Thus, when the user contacts the data center 200 and transmits the ID number 26, the data center 200 can invoice the sender (instead of the user) for the postage. Most preferably, the subsidy may have an expiration date or a diminishing schedule. The message 30 indicates that the cost of postage is fully subsidized if the BRMP 20 is posted by a specified date. Therefore, associated with the ID number 26 in the sender registration database 230 is information about any postage subsidy to be applied to the BRMP 20 and any relevant expiration dates (if any). Those skilled in the art will recognize that this type of capability eliminates the need for the sender to take out permit numbers with the USPS and provides another mechanism for motivating users to transmit the BRMP 20 in a timely manner.

On Page 11, please replace the third paragraph with the following paragraph:

As another example, the data center 200 may also possess additional report generation capabilities. For each ID number 26, a report may be automatically prepared on a periodic basis about the status of the mail campaign, such as: the number of BRMPs 20 that have been processed since the last reporting period, the total number of BRMPs 20 that have been processed and other pertinent information.

On Page 12, please replace the first paragraph with the following paragraph:

As yet another example, the data center 200 may not issue the registration ID number 26. Instead, the data center 200 may allow the sender to specify the

registration ID number 26 so long as it does not conflict with any other previously existing ones.

{ On Page 12, please replace the second paragraph with the following paragraph: }

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'A. J. Smith' or similar, written in a cursive style.

As yet still another example, the sender may specify more than one delivery address to the data center for the same ID number 26. Thus, the sender would leave the delivery address 22 blank and define other parameters for the data center 200 to use in determining which of the delivery addresses to use. For instance, based on the timeliness of the user contacting the data center 200, the sender may desire that the BRMP 20 be sent to different delivery addresses 22. Other parameters may be for payment types of responses where the BRMP 20 that are likely to include large amounts are sent to a different delivery address 20 for expedited handling. In this instance, the sender may define these users to the data center 200 or provide the user with a code to transmit to the data center 200 along with or as a component of the ID number 26.

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